

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 731

By Hardaway

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Second Lieutenant
Albert Louis Young of the Tuskegee Airmen.

WHEREAS, our nation was conceived by individuals who were willing to sacrifice their personal safety and concerns to ensure our individual and collective freedom, and the Volunteer State is especially proud to be the home of so many valiant men and women who performed above and beyond the call of duty; and

WHEREAS, the citizens of Tennessee have, throughout the years, been called upon to take up arms against the enemies of this great nation, risking their lives and leaving their loved ones behind to honorably safeguard the freedoms and liberties guaranteed to all citizens of these United States and vanquishing those who threaten our way of life; and

WHEREAS, while the heroic deeds of Tennesseans have been extolled throughout the history of our State and nation, the distinguished military service of every proud Tennessean should be illuminated, shared, and properly honored; and

WHEREAS, one such individual was Second Lieutenant Albert Louis Young, a member of the legendary Tuskegee Airmen, who served his country with valorous distinction during World War II; and

WHEREAS, by the end of World War II, almost 1,000 African Americans had won their Silver Wings at Tuskegee Army Air Field, and almost half of those individuals went on to serve our country in the European and Mediterranean wars as combat mission fighter pilots; and

WHEREAS, the Tuskegee Airmen were responsible for flying more than 15,000 sorties, destroying over 1,000 German aircraft, and receiving hundreds of Air Medals and more than 150 Distinguished Flying Crosses; and

WHEREAS, born on October 13, 1921, in Memphis, Albert Louis Young enlisted with the military in 1942, when he was twenty-one years old; he graduated from flight training on March 12, 1944, at Tuskegee Army Air Field in Alabama and was soon after deployed to Italy with the 100th Fighter Squadron, 332nd Fighter Group; and

WHEREAS, on January 21, 1945, Second Lieutenant Young was flying a P-51C Mustang on a bomber escort mission to attack oil storage facilities near Vienna, Austria; he reported engine trouble before arriving at his destination and was never heard from again. It is speculated that he experienced issues with his oxygen supply that resulted in a loss of consciousness; and

WHEREAS, Second Lieutenant Albert Young's body was discovered later that day 100 kilometers north of Vienna in a field south of Brno, Czechoslovakia; he was buried in a cemetery in Blucina, Czechoslovakia, on January 22, 1945; and

WHEREAS, on September 17, 1946, Second Lieutenant Young's remains were exhumed, and he was reinterred at the Lorraine American Cemetery in St. Avold, France; and

WHEREAS, Second Lieutenant Young was posthumously awarded the Purple Heart in honor of his ultimate sacrifice in defending our nation; and

WHEREAS, though little is known about Second Lieutenant Albert Young, some information regarding his lineage and history can be ascertained from census reports and other public records documents; his father was Albert Young of Yazoo, Mississippi, who died in late 1930, and his mother was Hazel, raised in Vicksburg, Mississippi, where she was a teacher, and moved to Memphis in late 1920 or early 1921, where she was a maid at a retail department store. Albert and Hazel were wed in 1921 in Memphis; it is unlikely that Second Lieutenant Albert Young had any siblings; and

WHEREAS, in 1930, Second Lieutenant Young was living with his mother and his grandmother, Mattie Davis; in 1940, he was listed as living with his mother and a lodger named Idella House, and his occupation was listed as hotel waiter, perhaps at the Peabody Hotel; and

WHEREAS, Tempy Austin Davis, born about 1850 in Mississippi almost certainly into slavery, was Second Lieutenant Young's great-grandmother, and he is known to have had two aunts on his mother's side, though their names are unknown; he also had one grand-uncle, Reverend Frank A. Davis, who lived at 428 St. Paul Avenue and together with his wife raised two children, born in Memphis during the 1920s, Frank A. Davis, Jr., and Thelma Davis; and

WHEREAS, Second Lieutenant Albert Young was listed as single in the 1940 census, so it can be assumed he did not marry before joining the Army and had no children of his own—unsurprising, considering he was only twenty-three when he died and had been occupied with his military service since at least 1943; and

WHEREAS, as one of the Tuskegee Airmen, Second Lieutenant Albert Young overcame segregation and prejudice to become a member of one of the most prestigious, decorated, and respected fighter groups of World War II; and

WHEREAS, while no offering can properly relay our gratitude for his bravery and dedication to preserving the treasured freedom that is inseparable from our American heritage and ideals, it is most appropriate that we should honor the memory of Second Lieutenant Albert Young to the full extent of our ability, as he made untold sacrifices to preserve the liberties we enjoy today; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED TENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby honor the memory of Second Lieutenant Albert Louis Young of Memphis and pay respectful tribute to his courageous service to our nation as one of Tennessee's most heroic citizens.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.